

We claim:

1. A computer-aided group-learning method for more than one user to work on a subject, the method comprising the steps of:

setting a duration of time for users to communicate in a dialogue session so as to allow the users to work on materials on the subject; and

monitoring at least one user's inputs during the dialogue session so as to have the monitored inputs available for analysis to guide at least one user back to the subject in the dialogue session when one or more users have been distracted from the subject;

such that the dialogue session provides an interactive environment to help the users learn.

2. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 wherein the materials for at least one user to work on are tailored to that user based on monitored inputs.

3. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of responding to a user's natural-language question.

4. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of restricting one user from communicating with at least one other user.

5. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 wherein the analysis includes analyzing the relevancy of the user's inputs.

6. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 wherein the analysis is also for generating a profile of one or more users.

7. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of restricting one or more users who can work on the subject.

8. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 7 wherein the restriction is on limiting a user to observing but not interacting in the dialogue session.

9. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of restricting a potential user from learning the subject with the more than one users based on information related to the potential user.

10. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of retrieving information related to one or more users for a potential user to decide on learning the subject with the one or more users.

11. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 further comprising the step of guiding the user to take notes on the subject so as to help the user learn the subject;

wherein the guidance is related to the subject.

12. A computer-aided group-learning method as recited in claim 1 wherein:

the users communicate in a mode of communication; and

the mode of communication can be selected from a unicast, multicast and broadcast mode.

13. A computer-aided group-learning system for more than one user to work on a subject, the system comprising:

a controller configured to set a duration of time for users to communicate in a dialogue session so as to allow the users to work on materials on the subject; and

a monitoring apparatus configured to monitor at least one user's inputs to the system during the dialogue session so as to have the monitored inputs available for analysis to guide at least one user back to the subject in the dialogue session when one or more users have been distracted from the subject;

such that the dialogue session provides an interactive environment to help the users learn.

14. A computer-aided group-learning system for more than one user to work on a subject the system comprising:

a plurality of notepads, with at least two of said notepads coupled together to allow information to communicate between each other;

at least one of the notepads being configured for a user to take notes while working on the subject through the system; and

a notepad controller configured to monitor the user's inputs to guide the user to take notes on the subject so as to help the user learn that subject;

wherein the guidance is related to the subject, and the system allows more than one user to work on the subject in a dialogue session to help the users learn.

15. A computer-aided learning system as recited in claim 14 wherein the guidance is presented in the notepad.

16. A computer-aided learning system as recited in claim 14 wherein the guidance depends on the user's strength in the subject.

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17. A computer-aided learning system as recited in claim 14 wherein the system is configured to allow the user to cut materials on the subject the user has received, and paste the materials in the notepad.

18. A computer-aided learning system as recited in claim 14 wherein the system is configured to allow the user to link the notes taken to the subject's materials that the user is working on.

19. A computer-aided group-learning system as recited in claim 18 wherein the link is from an area in the notes to a point in the materials.

20. A computer-aided group-learning method for more than one user to work on a subject, the method comprising the steps of:

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providing a plurality of notepads, with at least two of said notepads coupled together to allow information to communicate between each other;

allocating an area in a notepad for a user to take notes while working on the subject; and

monitoring the user's inputs to guide the user to take notes on the subject so as to help the user learn the subject;

wherein the guidance is related to the subject, and the method allows more than one user to work on the subject in a dialogue session to help the users learn.

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